

## **Recovery**

Recovery is a deeply personal process and no single, universally accepted definition of recovery currently exists. In the simplest sense, recovery is a *lived experience* of moving through and beyond the limits of one's disorder. In the process, individuals develop a positive and meaningful sense of identity separate from their condition, disability or its consequences in their life.<sup>1</sup> Key characteristics of recovery include:

- Recovery is personal and individualized (not defined by a treatment agency)
- Recovery moves beyond symptom reduction and relief (e.g. meaningful connections in the community, overcoming specific skill deficits, establishing a sense of quality and well-being)
- Recovery is both a process of healing (regaining) and a process of discovery (moving beyond)
- Recovery encompasses the possibility for individuals to test, make mistakes and try again.

Recovery can occur within or outside the context of professionally directed treatment, and where professional treatment is involved, it may, depending on its orientation and methods, play a facilitative, insignificant or inhibiting role in the recovery process.<sup>2</sup> A small yet exciting body of research suggests that peer-delivered services produce outcomes superior to professional treatment alone in several key domains, including increased social networks, lower levels of worry and improved satisfaction with life.